

The Power of Submission and Humility (1Peter 5:1-14)

I. INTRODUCTION – RELATING TO THE WORLD AROUND US

- A. How important what we do is and how we relate to God and people around us. There are several spiritual realities in the world around us that we need to learn to relate to. There is church leadership, our spiritual family, and the spirit realm (angels and demons) that all play into our daily lives.

II. THE ROLE OF SPIRITUAL LEADERS

- A. The Apostle Peter addresses spiritual leaders in this final chapter. He speaks to the “elders” of the church. The word is *presbyteros*. It means, an older or senior person. A leader in a spiritual body. It is those in your midst who act of spiritual leaders to bring spiritual direction, a covering, and ministry to the flock (the group of believers).

“The Elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; not as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.” (1Pe. 5:1-4)

- B. There are guidelines in scriptures as to how spiritual leadership is to function in the church. There is both a negative side and a positive side. First, Peter says how not to lead: He says, “*No by compulsion, not for dishonest gain, not as being lords over those entrusted to you.*” Then he gives the positive side: “*Do it willingly, serve eagerly, be an example to the flock*” (1Pe. 5:2-3).

- C. In the Church (the body of Christ), God has given spiritual leaders to oversee, teach, and give spiritual direction to the body as to what God is saying and doing. We call them the 5-fold ministry gifts, or spiritual “office” gifts. They are apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. These are full time ministers who serve the body of Christ. Pastors/teachers are more to a local congregation. Apostles, prophets, evangelists are more to the body of Christ at large.

“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” (Eph. 4:11-13).

- D. We should not confuse the 9 gifts of the Holy Spirit (1Cor. 12:4-11) with the 5-fold office gifts. You can give a word of prophecy, but that doesn’t necessarily mean that you are a prophet, etc. Also, it is the function of the gift and brings the title, not vice versa. So many today are looking for a title, instead of just serving the Lord with the gift He has given you. Or as Tommy Tenney used to say: “*We are into titles, God is into towels*”, speaking of Jesus washing the feet of His disciples. Which brings us to the next point, that of the importance of submission and humility.

III. THE POWER OF SUBMISSION AND HUMILITY

- A. There is a powerful lesson to learn in your walk of with Christ. That of submission and humility: Many are taught that the way to get ahead is to trample on everybody else. Jesus taught the exact opposite. The way to get ahead is to have a humble estimation of self and apply yourself unto God.

“Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. (1Pe. 5:5-7)”

- B. Peter says, “*all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility.*” (v.5). The word “humility” means lowliness, modesty, humble opinion of one’s own importance, rank etc. And why is that so important? Because, “*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*” The word “resists” is the word “oppose”. How many of us want grace instead of God opposing us? Of course we do!
- C. There is another reason to humble ourselves: “*That He may exalt you in due time*” (6). When you humble yourself under God’s hand, you entrust your life to God’s care who will see to it that you are rewarded and honored “*In due time*”. A great example of this truth is Joseph who was mistreated by his brothers. Then he was thrown into prison. But it was all part of God’s plan, and God exalted him “in due time”.
- D. Then it says, “*Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you*” (v.7). The word “care” means distractions, anxieties, burdens and worries. Of course we know the words of Jesus in Matt. 6:31-33 where He says not to worry about the things we need in life, because “*He cares for you.*”

V. RESIST THE DEVIL AND HE WILL FLEE FROM YOU

- A. Another reason to walk in humility is to be prepared to face the spiritual attacks that we encounter in life at different times. In fact, Peter says we are to be sober and vigilant. The word “sober” means, *calm and collected in spirit*. The word “vigilant” means, *sleeplessly watchful, awake. To give strict attention to.*

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.” (1Pe. 5:8-9).

- B. The devil walks about like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour. He walks about “like a lion”, but we need to remember that his teeth have been pulled out, as someone has said. He can roar, but he can’t bite you when you are “in Christ”.
- C. The solution to the roar of the devil, is “*to resist him steadfast in the faith*” (v.9). The word “resist” means, to withstand. To set against. We stand strong in faith against the onslaughts of the devil, knowing that everyone else go through the same struggles.